

WELCOMING & IMPORTANT NOTES



Family Agreements

Home and School Agreements At-A-Glance
(Policies, Expectations, etc.)



Welcome to Storybook Village!

- ♥ **Introduction** and “The 100 Languages” Poem
- ♥ **Agreements** for guaranteeing the quality of the educational relationships and of the experience of children and adults
 - ♥ **Daily Timetable** and extending day options
 - ♥ **Morning Arrivals and Departure Times**
 - ♥ **Daily Schedule:** our day at school, ateliers, and rituals
 - ♥ **School Closure Calendar**
 - ♥ **Mealtime and School Menu:** no outside food allowed
 - ♥ **What to Bring & Not Bring:** we are a community
 - ♥ **Illness Policy;** no-symptoms and exclusion policies
- ♥ **Participation of the Families** and family pictures
 - ♥ **Daily Communication** with the school app
 - ♥ **Family Meetings:** collaboration and cooperation
 - ♥ **School Events and Celebrations**
 - ♥ **Children’s Birthdays**
 - ♥ **Family Directory** with school and community resources
- ♥ **Admission, Enrollment, and Fees**
- ♥ **Our Village**



INVECE IL CENTO C'È.

Il bambino
è fatto di cento.
Il bambino ha
cento lingue
cento mani
cento pensieri
cento modi di parlare
di giocare e di pensare
cento sempre cento
modi di ascoltare
di stupire di amare
cento allegrie
per cantare e capire
cento mondi
da scoprire
cento mondi
da inventare
cento mondi
da sognare.
Il bambino ha
cento lingue
(e poi cento cento cento)
ma gliene rubano novantanove.
La scuola e la cultura
gli separano la testa dal corpo.
Gli dicono:
di pensare senza mani
di fare senza testa
di ascoltare e di non parlare
di capire senza allegrie
di amare e di stupirsi
solo a Pasqua e a Natale.
Gli dicono:
di scoprire il mondo che già c'è
e di cento
gliene rubano novantanove.
Gli dicono:
che il gioco e il lavoro
la realtà e la fantasia
la scienza e l'immaginazione
il cielo e la terra
la ragione e il sogno
sono cose
che non stanno insieme.

Gli dicono insomma
che il cento non c'è.
Il bambino dice:
invece il cento c'è.

Loris Malaguzzi

NO WAY. THE HUNDRED IS THERE.*

The child
is made of one hundred.
The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.
A hundred always a hundred
ways of listening
of marveling, of loving
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds
to discover
a hundred worlds
to invent
a hundred worlds
to dream.
The child has
a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred
more)
but they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture
separate the head from the body.
They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel
only at Easter and Christmas.
They tell the child:
to discover the world already there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety-nine.
They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy
science and imagination
sky and earth
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.

And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says:
No way. The hundred is there.

Loris Malaguzzi



Introduction

A Welcome Note:

Welcome to Storybook Village Preschool! Our program is designed to be a place where childhoods are protected, and adults want to be a child again, as our environment invites all learners to explore and engage. When applying for the child care licenses and during the pre-licensing inspections in April 2019, the state licensing analysts asked me to identify the philosophy Storybook will implement as it is required to have an organization based on education and experience. As my heart is teaching through love while fostering a love for learning, I fell in love with the Reggio Emilia Approach years ago while attending college. I built Storybook Village Preschool, embracing a “pedagogy of relationships” within a community that believed in children’s rights to grow and learn in a way that focused on learning processes. When children feel important while learning the skills and behaviors to be part of a community, they are prepared for school and life as they have mastered how to face life as passionate problem-solvers.

As a Reggio-inspired preschool, I was grateful to be part of the North America Study Group that visited Reggio Emilia in November 2023 during the 60th birthday of the First Municipal Preschool in Reggio Emilia, Preschool Robinson. I experienced firsthand how loving a Reggio Emilia community, school, and intentional environments are for the children, families, and teachers. There is no cookie-cutter mold or blueprint to being Reggio; it is a mindset inspired by the Reggio Emilia schools about the children and the community of adults who are responsible for the children.



Marble Lions sitting on the steps of a church in Reggio Emilia, Italy. November 2023

There are many wonderful ways to approach early childhood education and quality preschools in Sonoma County, but what makes each preschool unique is its way of being. Storybook Village Preschool is all about loving and celebrating the children as a community. Certain agreements promise practices and procedures to ensure children, families, and teachers receive quality care.

While we believe in the fairness of every child and family getting their needs met, we must understand that we are community-driven since the children deserve to feel a sense of belonging to a community. Learning is interweaved within relationships with peers and adults. The needs of the collaborative community are our focus while honoring individual learning processes. Our agreements (policies, expectations, etc.) ensure Storybook Village Preschool continues to live day-by-day, nurturing our children and adults while valuing all the collaboration needed to be a family-centered program.

Each parent who encounters a new school experience forms their own assessment, which is developed, and acquires meaningful connections as they deepen their understanding of the service through the experience and dialogue with the other members. I hope you and your family trust and find joy in our time together, as this is the beginning of your parent participation journey. The parenting skills you will learn as your child grows with us will prepare you for kindergarten and the school years to follow. We are excited to be part of your family's story.

Please contact me with any questions, thoughts, or desires to participate. I appreciate all the dialogue and vulnerability you share with us, as I know how important our partnership is to raising your child.

Love,

Nicole Monachello

Nicole Monachello, Director & Owner



Agreements

Agreements are also considered our Program-Wide Expectations in our school, which parents, families, teachers, and visitors sign up for as members of our learning community, guaranteeing the quality of the educational relationships and of the experience of children and adults.

This welcome guide, or mini-handbook, highlights the common questions or areas needing more information, as joining a relationship-driven, quality program requires all adults to be intentional and respectful participants.

As mentioned, this is a snapshot of our Family Handbook, which can be found on our website: <https://storybookvillagepreschool.com/handbook>

Director: nicole@storybookvillagepreschool.com

Assistant Director: info@storybookvillagepreschool.com

Scan here for our Family Handbook!



Here we have children and adults who seek the pleasure of playing, working, talking, thinking, and inventing together, engaged in learning how the existence and the relationships of things and of people can be sought out and enjoyed in friendship.

Loris Malaguzzi, 1983

Our Agreements

Daily Timetable

Storybook Village Preschool proposes different types of services based on the location and licenses issued by the state, including toddler and preschool programs with the following operating hours:

Full-day (3 to 5 days) from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

The Preschool Room only offers the possibility of:

Part-day (3 to 5 days) from 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Extra Care Hour from 4:00 - 5:00 pm

These possibilities can be used upon the family's request and the director's approval during the enrollment process. Due to limited availability and flexibility as a fully enrolled program, you must discuss schedule changes with the director. Our toddler and preschool programs, both part and full-day schedule options, provide daily snacks and lunch to all the children as part of the care and educational offer.



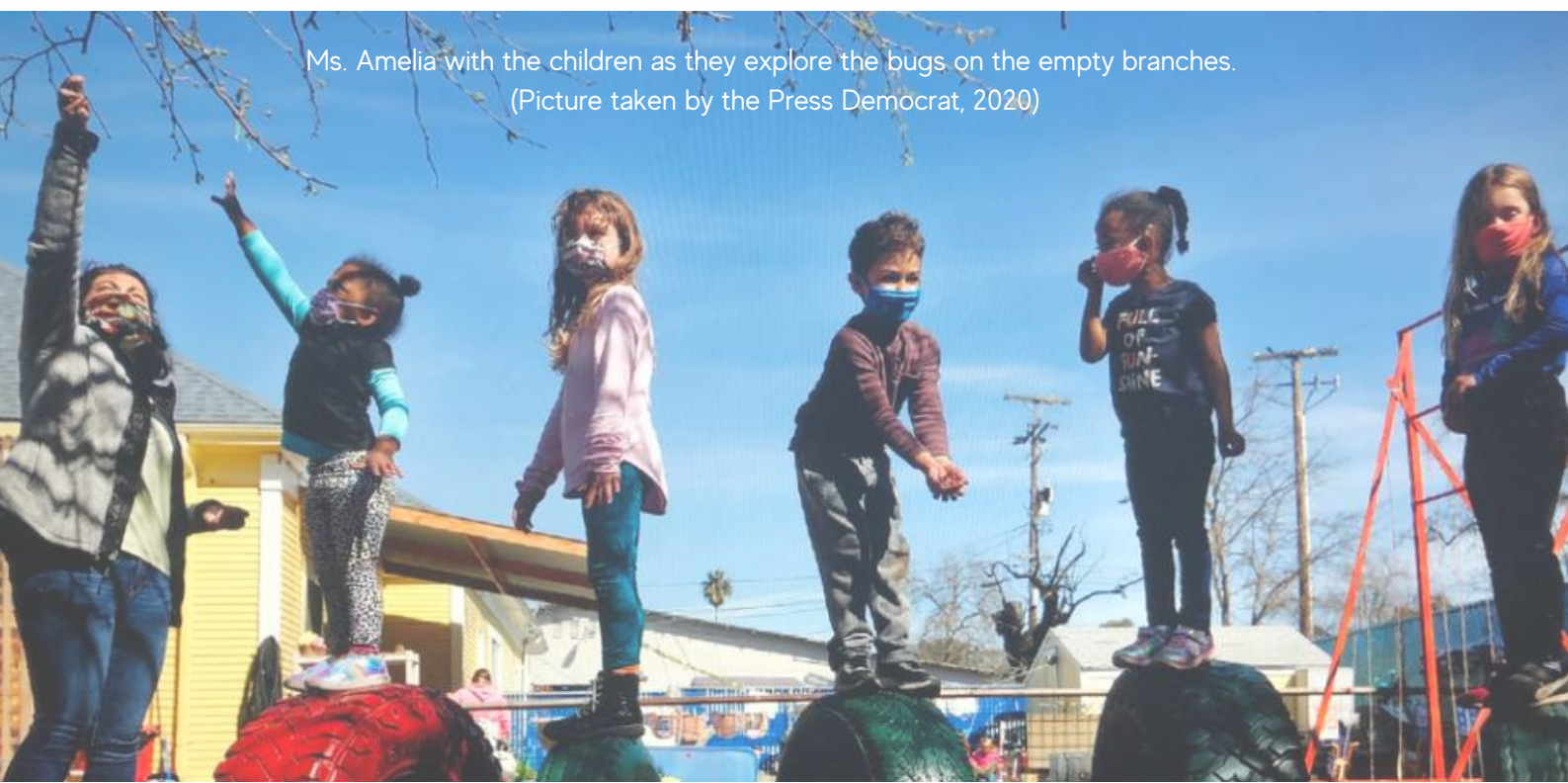
Morning Arrivals & Departure Rituals

The times established for arrival and departure are established to give the children, during each day and over the months of attendance, a significant and adequate amount of time to become a group of individuals who grow and learn together. We'll make sure to share schedule adjustments with our daily happenings as needs are assessed since the tasks and responsibilities may change to support the needs of the group enrolled.

Morning arrival is permitted from 8:00 am (starting at 8:30 am for families scheduled for a part-day) to 9:00 am. Around 9:00 am in each class, the teachers and children meet together (the "assembly" or "meeting" or "circle") to make decisions about the organization of their day and to construct, day by day, the rules (agreements) of being together. **Respect for the arrival time by 9:00 am fosters in all the children a sense of well-being and participation in this important daily event in which they can identify with the group and make agreements together.**

Departure time and rituals from the school can be at the families' discretion but must be before your child's contracted time. For those children who go home after lunch, the departure time is by 12:30 pm to allow the group of children who remain at school to begin their afternoon nap in tranquility.

Respect for a punctual exit by 4:00 pm (or 5:00 pm for the approved extended hour) is essential for each child who waits for their parent and participates in the departure of their classmates. It is also a sign of respect for the work of the staff who help clean (school staff and janitorial services), who at this time must begin cleaning and re-organizing the environment, the teachers who must finish their shift at a set time, and the teachers who oversee the group of children who attend the extended hour of care, who must be able to organize their work in a condition of peace and safety.



Ms. Amelia with the children as they explore the bugs on the empty branches.

(Picture taken by the Press Democrat, 2020)

Daily Schedule & Learning

During the day at school, there are different occasions and times designated for the children to take part and assume tasks and responsibilities related to the life of the group. As we said, the morning meeting is at 9:00 am, followed by the morning snack. There are predictable activities for the children and adults, but the children organize daily play and projects. When we describe our curriculum as emergent, many parents ask, "What will my children learn?" or "What will my child learn during the day if it's play-based?" Our approach to learning is understanding that the teachers intentionally follow the children's interests and abilities and present the materials and discussions as "proposals" or provocations. Play is the children's right and their universal love language, including what research says is the best approach to teaching young children.

There are so many pieces and steps to designing a Reggio-inspired program, fostering the freedom of learning. We want to ensure that the freedom children feel and embrace is within loving boundaries at school, implementing the expectations and agreements. The adults decide what areas and when the children will explore, and the children will have the freedom to choose how they will investigate and engage within the designated areas and materials. Through the Teaching Pyramid framework, the teachers and children are co-present in learning through play, establishing positive relationships with age-appropriate strategies to support behaviors and individual needs. The teachers are part of the learning process, observing how each child learns, and documenting the processes. Mix-aged learning provides friendship-driven learning, including the atelier spaces designed for specific ages and abilities, fostering deeper learning within small groups of children who are close to age with similar skills.





School Closure Calendar

The school operates on a year-round basis, except for holiday closures. If a holiday falls on a weekend, the school will be closed on the closest workday. Our calendar is based on the Santa Rosa City Schools' holiday calendar and closes for one week in summer, spring, and winter. These dates are shared with families each summer, and the calendar is available on our website. **We close early at 12:30 pm every second Wednesday of the month for staff development.**



Mealtime and School Menu

Our school provides nutritious snacks and lunch for children in the toddler and preschool rooms. Our mealtimes promote healthy habits and provide nutritional and positive experiences through meaningful mealtimes. The preschoolers will be responsible and proud to plant and prepare their food, from planting seedlings to harvesting vegetables. Our 3-week cycle menu is emailed to families and posted on the parent board and website. **We're a nut-free preschool and we do not allow outside food into the school.**



What to Bring & Not Bring

We give parents and families a handout that shares things to bring and not bring to school, depending on your child's classroom. Toys and outside food are not allowed in the school and must be left in the vehicle. We can help families needing support with transitions. All children must be dressed in user-friendly elastic-waist clothing as much as possible to promote self-help skills. We store all the backup clothing in a Ziploc bag in the classroom; the teachers will send home soiled clothing and request replacements.



Outside Every Day

As a quality preschool, we spend time outside daily, regardless of the season. Ensuring children come to school dressed appropriately and have a supply of backup clothes is crucial for our school days' success. This requires a commitment to each parent/guardian to provide and maintain the proper clothing. Encouraging children to connect with nature and the outdoor classroom every day is also a core principle of Reggio Emilia. We have school rainsuits for each child to wear during messy play or wet seasons!



Illness Policy

If you are still determining if your child can attend preschool, a good rule of thumb is to stay at home for each new onset of illness and ongoing symptoms, even if your child has allergies. We do not provide care for children with illness symptoms, even for common colds, since they may be contagious, and we cannot avoid close contact within a group care setting. If your child needs medicine to feel better, they must stay home to rest.



If a child is sent home for any illness symptoms, they must stay home 24 hours (the entire following school day) before they may return to preschool. Children can attend preschool if they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without medication.

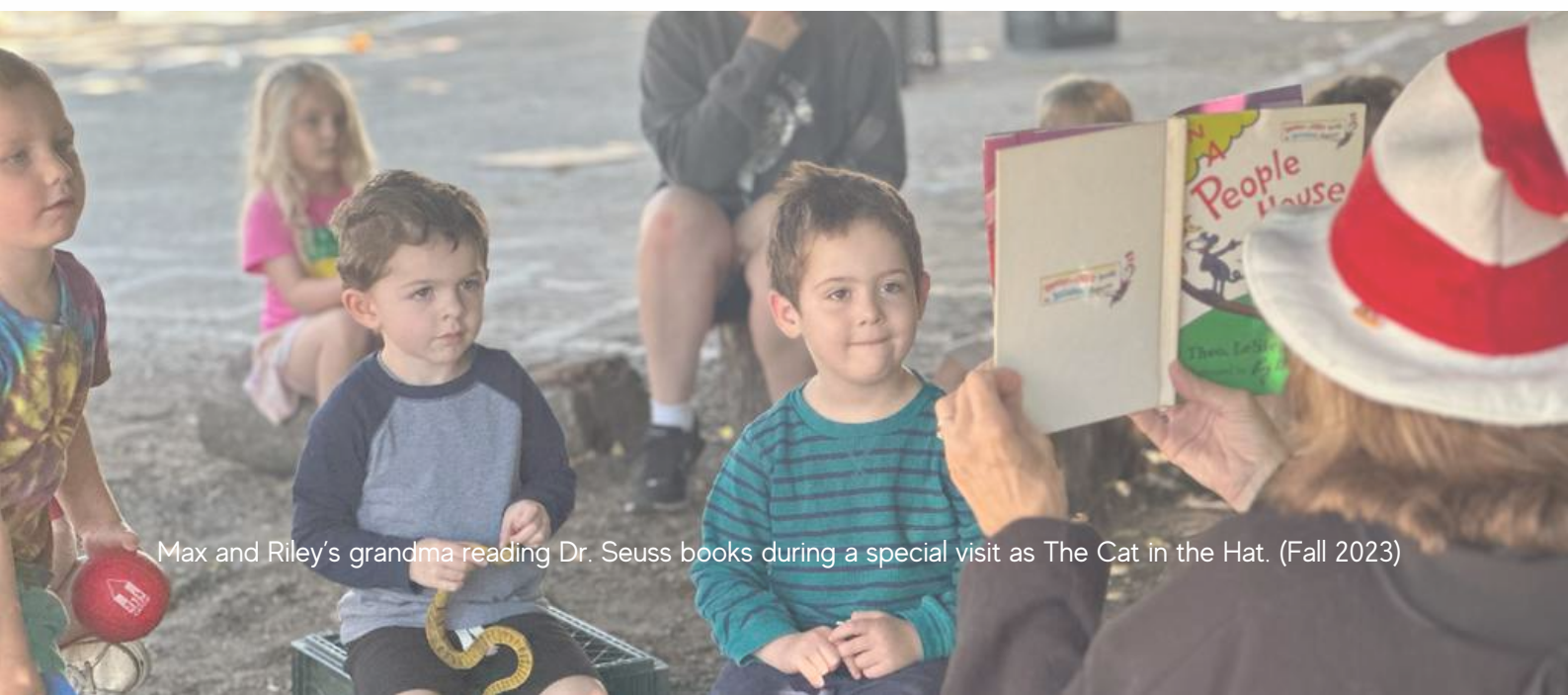
There is specific guidance for returning to care depending on the circumstances. Please read the Illness Policy in our Family Handbook for more information and support regarding health concerns and planning purposes. We will notify parents/guardians whenever children have been exposed to contagious illnesses.

Parents wash hands with their children upon arrival, which is a way to prevent illnesses!

Family Participation

As relationships create a sense of belonging and drive learning, the schools in Reggio Emilia express parent participation as "an ongoing dialogue." In the educational experience of Reggio Emilia, the infant-toddler centers and preschools are conceived as a context of continuous interaction between the three protagonists: children, teachers, and parents, each having their own expectations and rights, a context where listening, welcoming, and possibilities for growth are available to all, in an intense web of relationships and processes of development and participation. (Indications - Preschools and infant-toddler Centres of the Municipality of Reggio Emilia) Storybook Village Preschool's policies and expectations combined as Agreements create participation opportunities for all parents, family members, and friends.

The children's everyday experience of learning and being together at school is important for strengthening families' understanding of early childhood education, which is a common good as children's and parents' rights are the responsibility of our community. When you know all children's rights within our services and how participation connects you to your child's day-to-day experiences, your time or support will generate and nurture the feelings and culture of solidarity, responsibility, and inclusion. Participation teaches children they are unique, and we value their educational experiences, fostering a love for learning within a community while protecting childhoods. We love ideas and creativity in participating as we know the stressors of a healthy work-life balance. This means no delegating or alienation. Instead, it confirms the importance of parents' presence and role, who have always been highly valued in our Storybook Village Preschool traditions.



Max and Riley's grandma reading Dr. Seuss books during a special visit as The Cat in the Hat. (Fall 2023)



Family Pictures

We ask families to email pictures before their child's first school day. We use family pictures to make family books and displays, including lunchtime placers cards and in the Family Directory. When children see photos of their families, they feel their presence in the school. The family photos are also for visual and meaningful strategies to support separation, emotions, transitions, and co-regulation.

Daily Communication and the School App

You will be emailed an invite link directly from the childcare management software company within 24 hours of your child's first day; the invite is usually sent to the junk inbox. Teachers will share daily and weekly happenings regarding our group learning through photos and dialogue. Parents can share updates about attendance and needs through the app; it is important to understand that the app is primarily one-directional, and conversations about specific questions should happen in person, especially regarding how your child is doing. The teachers' focus and time is with the children as their presence is deep in the learning with the children.



Family Meetings & School Events

Over the course of each school year, the school and individual classrooms will organize a wide variety of opportunities for meetings and events. The contents, methods, and timeframes are planned in relation to the identities and expectations of the children, the parents, and the teaching staff who make up the school community in that particular year. The approach to these meaningful times is informal with open dialogue.





Children's Birthdays

SVP believes birthdays, celebrations, and seasonal events are great times to include nutritious foods and active play. We make healthy habits part of the fun. We serve nutritious foods that fit the theme/interest and plan fun activities such as festive music, friendship art, and silly games. If you wish to provide a healthy treat for your child's birthday, our Family Handbook lists suggestions.



Each classroom has a birthday tradition to honor each child's special day. While understanding time and calendar concepts are not age-appropriate, we had our preschoolers decorate a birthday lantern on their birthday so the children can observe their classroom bloom with each birthday throughout the school year; they were able to categorize birthdays by seasons. Our toddlers have newborn pictures in frames to add birthday pictures as a collage so they can see themselves grow.

Family Directory

The Family Directory is an excellent resource for planning playdates to strengthen school friendships and family connections. We continuously update our Family Directory as children join us and move up classrooms. Please let us know if you see a correction needed or if you would like to add information like siblings and pet names, including updated photos.



Admissions

Pre-Enrollment & Enrollment Criteria

During the enrollment period, parents can visit Storybook Village Preschool on the dates indicated each year on the calendar published in the school's newsletters. Your child's enrollment packet and pre-enrollment fees must be provided to the school office to guarantee your child's start date. Families attending the same center from one year to the next must complete the re-enrollment form with the annual registration fee during the scheduled re-enrollment season, usually between January and March. Families must provide the school office with updated immunization records as they are completed.

We understand personal and family needs arise, so the agreed start date may not work for your family. In that case, we may not hold your child's spot without collecting the tuition. Your child may return to the waiting list for an available spot in the future. All pre-enrollment fees are non-negotiable.

Weekly Tuition

The weekly tuition is due on the Friday before the week begins. There are fees for late payment. There is an option for automatic payments through Tuition Express; please see the director for more information.



Signing In and Out

Please sign or clock your child in at arrival and out at departure at the check-in area located just inside the front door. Each child must be signed in and signed out every day by the child's parent/guardian. Full signature and the time of day are required (the State of California mandates this), or clocking in/out with the school portal. The subsidized childcare attendance forms can be signed in and out of the clipboard at the front entrance.

No Cell Phones

Please don't use your electronic devices during pick up, drop off, or when children are present. Children need your full attention during these transitions. It is also very important that the teachers can directly communicate with you during these times. If you need to take a call in an emergency, please step outside our school building to do so. Our school appreciates families being respectful and supporting our Program-Wide Expectations, as our work is precious, and we want to prevent distractions from the children's play.

Our Village

Our classroom welcome boards have teacher bios, and the Family Directory has our teachers and other members of our village so you can become familiar with the individuals who spend time at our school. It takes a village to care for the children!



Ms. Nicole's mom, Lori, helps at the school during special events and with cooking and gardening projects.